

PVIC Sunday Service - 4/9/2017

Sermon: The Attributes of God - Love

Definition: *God's love means that God eternally gives himself to others*

God's love is pre-existent

Could God love before he created us? How could love exist before he created us to love?

Well the answers lies in the very nature of God. God exists as the Trinity. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. And before we ever showed up, God's love existed within Himself. Let's read John 17: 24. This is part of a prayer that Jesus offers on the night he was betrayed.

Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

Here we see that the love of God existed before we ever showed up. That God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit existed in a community of love. God didn't need to create us to become loving. It was part of who He is in His nature and will always be.

Discussion: How might the fact that God exists as a community of love inspire our church?

God's love is unconditional

Romans 5:8:

But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us

God's love is expressed in the fact that Christ died for us, while we were still sinners. Knowing your faults. Knowing your weaknesses. Knowing the ugliness of your soul. Knowing your addictions. Knowing your shame. He dies for You. He didn't wait for you to clean yourself up. He didn't wait for you to pull your act together. He didn't wait for you to pursue Him. He pursued you by dying for you. Before you knew who He was. Before you know how to talk about Him. Before you ever tried to sing about Him and for Him. Before you ever knew what love really was. He loved you. And you know this because He died for you, while you were still a sinner. God's love does not depend on you, God's love depends on God.

Discussion: Even though Christ died for us while we were sinners, his desire for us is to grow in holiness by sanctifying us. How can we honor God's unconditional love in the manner in which we live?

God's love is sacrificial

The following passages of scripture deal with the giving nature of Christ's sacrifice. Assign the passages to individuals, read them, and come back together to share the impact of Christ's sacrifice (Romans 8:32, Galatians 1:3-4, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 5:2, Ephesians 5:25, 1 Timothy 2:5-6, Titus 2:13-14)

God's love is transformational

When the pre-existent, unconditional, sacrificial love of God is poured out upon us, it should translate into a change in how we extend love to others. Christ says in John 13:34,35:

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples.

Discussion: Share opportunities in your life when you have tried to show love to others the way Christ has loved us. In contrast, share instances where you did not show love like Christ, or ask for prayer for situations where you would like to show love but are struggling.